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SUBJECT: SECURITY COUNCIL CONTINUES DISCUSSIONS ON GAZA

REF: A. STATE 7233

[1](#)B. USUN 75

[1](#)1. (SBU) Following a U.S. decision to engage, the Security Council continued consultations January 24 on a draft Presidential Statement (PRST) on the humanitarian situation in Gaza. The meetings concluded without agreement on a text.

All delegations requested the United States to convey its bottom line during a final discussion of the text January 25.

(On January 25, DPRs will meet in the morning to review text and PRs will meet in the afternoon to determine if there is consensus.) During morning meetings on January 24, USUN enumerated additional elements that would need to be included in the PRST in order to win American support and offered specific language proposals. In the afternoon of January 24, PermReps rejoined the matter. Recalling that the Security Council had never condemned rocket attacks from Gaza into Israel nor condemned the Hamas coup last June, Amb Wolff made clear that the United States could not concur with any statement that did not also address the security situation. He explained that the United States had a special role in the peace process, including a responsibility to support the legitimate government of President Abbas.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Libyan PR Etalhi and South African PR Kumalo expressed pessimism that the Council could accept all of the U.S. proposals. Etalhi suggested that if the United States insisted on a condemnation of the rocket attacks, Libya would seek a condemnation of Israeli military incursions into Gaza.

Russian PR Churkin, however, made a strong pitch for serious consideration of U.S. proposals in order to obtain consensus, although he also said "some elements clearly cannot be accepted." Otherwise, he warned, the window of opportunity opened in Annapolis would be closed. Churkin underscored Russian support for a strong condemnation of rocket attacks, a position echoed by the European and Latin delegations. Churkin also emphasized that a PRST that condemned rocket attacks would be an "important political message" from the Council. Chinese DPR Liu also restated China's willingness to seriously review U.S. proposals in order to reach a consensus, arguing it was the Council's duty to address the crisis, a theme echoed by many delegations, including Churkin, who expressed concern for the consequences of failure for the Palestinians. UK DPR Pierce sought to summarize the elements that commanded unanimous support: a condemnation of violence, a concern about the deteriorating humanitarian situation, a call for all parties to abide by their obligations under international law, a call for the opening of crossings and support for PM Fayyad's proposal for Palestinian control of those crossings, and a call for international assistance to the Palestinians. There was some debate as to the sequence of primary subjects: should the humanitarian situation or the security situation be addressed

first.

13. (SBU) Separately, the Arab Group met the afternoon of January 24 to discuss the U.S. proposals. The Egyptians and Jordanians advised UNSC that the Arab Group has agreed that if the Council fails to issue a PRST, the Arab Group will ask the Libyan delegation (Arab member of the Council) to table a resolution that is the text of the revised PRST (ref b) tabled by Libya January 23, which had the support of the other 14 delegations on the Council. Reportedly, Palestinian PR Mansour said the Palestinians could accept some but not all of the U.S. proposals to the PRST text. There was a heated debate on the issue of including language condemning rocket attacks. For the first time, nearly all Arab delegations agreed to condemn rocket attacks, but aggressive Syrian opposition led the group to settle on language expressing deep concern.
KHALILZAD